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Message Text

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13
ACTION EA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-01 INR-05 L-02

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 RSC-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

USIA-06 /053 W
---------- 012683
R 230817Z DEC 74
FM AMEMBASSY JAKARTA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5812
INFO AMCONSUL MEDAN
AMCONSUL SURABAYA

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EO 11652: N/A
TAGS: PINT PINS ID
SUBJ: INDONESIAN CHRISTIAN ORGANIZATION HINT CONCERN OVER POLITICAL PRISONERS, ARBITRARY GOVERNMENT

1. IN JOINT CHRISTMAS MESSAGE ISSUED DECEMBER 20, PROTESTANT INDONESAN COUNCIL OF CHURCHES AND CATHOLIC BISHOPS CONFERENCE INSERTED TWO STATEMENTS WHICH WILL BE TAKEN AS THINLY-VEILED CRITICISMS OF GOI OVER POLITICAL PRISONERS AND ARBITRARY STYLE OF GOVERNMENT.

2. FIRST COMMENT, IN DISCUSSION OF IMPORTANCE OF SECURITY TO LIFE OF NATION, QUOTED BY STATE NEWS AGENCY ANTARA AS FOLLOWS: "WITHOUT DECREASING VIGILANCE, PARTICULARLY TOWARD THOSE WHO HAVE BEEN LONG IMPRISSONED, IN ADDITION TO LAW AND AUTHORITY WE SHOULD ALSO SHOW THE HUMAN FACE AND MERCY OF OUR PANCASILA STATE."

3. SECOND STATEMENT, IN DISCUSSION OF USES OF "AUTHORITY," QUOTED AS FOLLOWS: EVERY RULER, AT THE TOP AS WELL AS AT LOWER LEVELS, SHOULD NOT BE RPOUD, HIGH-HANDED OR ACT ARBITRARILY. AUTHORITY IS ONLY MEANINGFUL IF IT IS
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DEDICATED TO SOCIETY..."

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4. COMMENT: MILD AS THESE STATEMENTS ARE, COMING IN OTHERWISE UNEXCEPTIONAL MESSAGE OF CHRISTMAS GREETINGS THEY WILL NOT ECAPE ATTENTION OF GOI OR OF EDUCATED PUBLIC. CATHOLIC HIERARCHY IS KNOWN TO BE CONCERNED OVER POLITICAL PRISONERS QUESTIONS, AND SOME OF JANUARY 15 DETAINEES INCLUDED PROMINENT LAWYER YAP THIAM HIEN ARE CHRISTIAN. STATEMENT ALSO RELEASED DAY BEFORE DELIVERY OF VERDICT IN HARIM SIREGAR JANUARY 15 TRIAL, THUS BY IMPLICATION CALLING FOR "MERCIFUL" DECISION. MORE BROAD IMPORT OF JONT MESSAGE IS AS VEILED BUT UNMISTAKABKE HINT TO GOI THAT INDONESIAN CHURCHES CONSCIOUS OF THEIR ROLE AS MORAL GUARDINAS OF SOCIETY AND OF EXAMPLE OF CHURCHES ELSEWHERE(EG KOREA), AND CANNOT BE EXPECTED TO MAINTAIN SILENCE IN FACE OF AUTHORITARIAN ACTIONS BY GOVERNMENT. TOUSSAINT

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Message Attributes

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